



H.R. 5335 – Trail of Tears Documentation Act

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 5335 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Zach Wamp (R-TN) on February 8, 2008. The House Committee on Natural Resources agreed to the bill, as amended, by voice vote on July 23, 2008.

H.R. 5335 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 22, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R. 5335 adds approximately 2,900 miles of trail and water routes to the existing Trail of Tears National Historic Trail. The additional trail components will consist of water routes in Alabama, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Tennessee, as well as trails in Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. With the addition of these trails and water routes, the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail will span about 5,300 miles in length.

BACKGROUND

With the passage of the Indian Removal Act of 1830, the U.S. Government forcibly removed over 16,000 Cherokee Indians from their settled homelands east of the Mississippi River in Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina, and Georgia. The Cherokee were forced to resettle in present day Oklahoma. The migration west claimed thousands of Cherokee lives as a result of illness, exposure to the elements, and exhaustion. The route traveled by the Cherokee in their resettlement west of the Mississippi became known as the Trail of Tears.

In 1987, Congress designated over 2,400 miles of the original Trail of Tears to commemorate the Cherokee lives lost over the course of the removal. H.R. 5335 would add 2,900 new miles of the side routes traveled by the Cherokee during the removal to the originally designated Trail of Tears.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that "implementing the bill would cost about \$300,000 a year beginning in fiscal year 2009." [CBO cost estimate for H.R. 5335](#)

STAFF CONTACT

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